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Letter dated 28 October 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Following the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 24 October 2002 in the Security Council during the public meeting devoted to presentation of the final report of the Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and on the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to send you this letter in protest at his allegations.

The Government of the Rwandese Republic considers Mr. Okitundu's statement to be a provocation. It shows how little will the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has shown to implement the Lusaka and Pretoria Peace Agreements.

The persistent denial of Rwanda's security concerns by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is evidence of its bad faith and pertinacity in continuing to cooperate with the forces of genocide, the ex-FAR and the Interahamwe militiamen in their endeavour to destabilize Rwanda in violation of all the Agreements signed and despite the good will shown by the Rwandan Government to fulfil its commitments, including the total withdrawal of its troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has once again failed to fulfil its commitments with respect to the promises of peace so loudly proclaimed at Pretoria before the entire international community.

The Government of Rwanda is concerned at the attitude of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, not only because of Mr. Okitundu's statement to the Council but also because of the Kinshasa Government's usual political speech, which contains a veritable appeal to hatred and constitutes a veritable provocation. We hereby appeal to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to stop demonizing the Rwandan Government. We also ask it to behave like a responsible Government that complies with its international obligations. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo should demonstrate its good will by acknowledging the positive actions taken by the Rwandan Government, especially the total withdrawal of Rwandan forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This withdrawal took place from 17 September to 5 October 2002 and was observed by the diplomatic corps accredited to Kigali, the Joint Military Commission and the United Nations Organization Mission in the

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Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). It was also acknowledged by the third party's verification procedures.

In his statement to the Council on 24 October, Mr. Okitundu said: "At the beginning of this month, the Tanzanian authorities intercepted a cargo of 36 tons of coltan, which Rwanda intended to ship through the port of Dar es Salaam. This is tangible evidence that some Mafia networks have not been dismantled, on the contrary". This statement is completely unfounded and is further evidence of the strategy of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which wants to continue its defamatory and demonizing campaign against the Rwandan Government, contrary to the principle of good neighbourliness and the prospect of cooperation.

This is in no way evidence of traffic in Congolese coltan, as it is well known not only that Rwanda has coltan on its own territory but also that all exports from and imports to Rwanda transit either through Tanzania or through Kenya, through the ports of Dar es Salaam and Mombassa.

In its report (S/1998/1096) of 18 November 1998 on arms trafficking in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ambassador Kassem acknowledged the existence of arms trafficking networks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and at the same time acknowledged the actual existence of the forces of genocide, the ex-FAR and the Interahamwe militiamen operating on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the threat they pose on the borders of the Republic of Rwanda. It is therefore surprising and contradictory now that Mr. Kassem, in another report on a different subject four years later, should completely ignore the existence of Rwanda's security concerns related to the presence of *génocidaires* on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo who have always cooperated and continue to cooperate closely with its Government to complete the genocide planned since 1959 in collaboration with foreign forces and given final implementation in 1994.

Yet these security concerns are recognized by the entire international community, the Security Council and the Lusaka and Pretoria Agreements. It is therefore inconceivable that Ambassador Kassem and Mr. Okitundu should have forgotten the results of the investigation that were made public in report S/1998/1096 of 18 November 1998.

This deliberate or imposed contradiction can therefore only be laid at the door of political motives and external political manipulation.

In view of the above, I should like to request you kindly to exert the necessary pressure to induce the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to:

- Behave like a Government that is worthy, responsible and respectful of international commitments and the sovereignty of its neighbours;
- Stop its campaign of demonization and its defamatory talk against the Rwandan Government;
- Cease its moral and material assistance to the Interahamwe militiamen and the ex-FAR;

- Comply with all the provisions of the Lusaka and Pretoria Agreements and not take advantage of the withdrawal of Rwandan troops to re-supply the ex-FAR and Interahamwe militiamen and thereby threaten Rwandan territory;

- Refrain from any provocation that might unleash renewed hostilities and compromise the Lusaka and Pretoria Agreements and the prospects of peace in the Great Lakes region.

Despite the constant provocation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Rwandan Government remains committed to promoting peace and security in Central Africa and the Great Lakes region. It reiterates that it is fully available and ready to cooperate with the Security Council, the third party and the countries of the region in order to find solutions that are satisfactory to all parties and a lasting peace in the region.

The Rwandan Government continues to follow the development of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo attentively and impatiently awaits positive signs concerning respect for the demobilization process and disarmament of the Interahamwe militiamen and the ex-FAR, and their repatriation to Rwanda.

However, in view of the negative signs with respect to the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Rwandan Government reserves the right to assume its responsibilities in the face of a possible attempt to cause destabilization or to threaten its territory and people.

We should be grateful if you would kindly arrange for this letter to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Anastase **Gasana**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative